

Quick and Easy Ideas:

Everyday Family Engagement Strategies for Early Education Programs

1. Enrollment Sets the Tone! Create a one pager to describe the relationship between your Center and families as they are key partners in the success of their child. List what families can expect from the program, such as monthly newsletters, frequent communication from staff and describe what is expected of the family stating “ You can play a role in your child’s education in any of the following ways” ... and list multiple roles your Center invites families to participate and have them check-mark their areas of interest, for example: Will attend quarterly family nights where they can meet other families and/or I will learn new ways of working with my child at home to support learning at school.



2. Greet every family by name instead of “Jack’s mom”

3. Identify the home languages of all your families and translate materials

4. Create signage that sets the tone that families are essential to child’s success. Ex. “Together we are Better!”, “Families and Teachers Funds of Knowledge- Ask us what this means”, “You are your child’s First and most important teacher”, “Roles families play in our Center.” Use real pictures of current families when you can, to expand on the statement.

5. During a staff meeting, have staff reflect to the 4 core beliefs and share which families each finds most difficult to partner with and why. You will notice this is different for each staff person and staff can support one another with different types of families.

6. Intentionally keep note of family participation. Choose a staff person to connect with families who don’t typically respond or participate to find out strategies for communication or other barriers that may exist.

7. Invite community partners to host “Parent Workshops” where they can promote their services and you can help families connect. Offer childcare and interpretation when possible.

8. Utilize Zoom and online platforms for communications- YouTube videos explaining new classroom concept and lessons that month. *Look into different online interpretation/features*

“Zoom Story time”

- “YouTube- About our Classroom Calendar”
- “YouTube-Strength Spotting in 2 and 3-year-olds”



9. Every classroom posts its weekly schedule on Monday outside the door, by text and by email. Always include a “Here’s what you can do at home” section. Even simple questions like, “Did you start a new letter this week?”

10. Every staff person wears a name tag with their first name, posts a short bio outside the classroom and on the school website.

11. Host “Family Conferences” at least 3 times a year. This can be in person, on the phone or online video.

12. Make sure that the tone of all family communications is respectful and promotes partnership. “If I was a parent, would this feel good to receive?”

13. Highlight and celebrate families and staff who are demonstrating effective partnerships. “Power Partnership Spotlight”

14. Family partnership has a prominent place on the program's website

15. The space where staff and families gather is welcoming and has adult sized chairs :) Make it look like a living room.

16. The program surveys families for their input on program improvements, desired topics for quarterly learning programs, preferred events, guest speakers from the community, etc. Offer multiple ways families can give their input and translate.

17. Classroom staff send home activities at least once a month that families can do with their children.



18. Put up a “Give and Get” Board where families can offer items or services they can give and request things they need. For example “I have toddler boys clothes” “Call me if you need a ride to Kindergarten orientation night. I live in Hallow Woods” and on get things like “Anyone have coats size 3? Text:_____”. Ask a parent to oversee this board each year so it’s for “parents by parents”.

19. Ask families to write a “Hopes and Dreams” letters request every year. What do they hope and dream for their child this coming year? Have teachers read these letters to learn more about families.

20. Set families up for success with a strong transition to Kindergarten plan, with all local schools through visits, letters, and introduction phone calls. Work with the family to create an “All About Me” one pager on their child’s strengths, learning styles, important things to know, unique personality, challenges, and how the family is and wants to be involved as a Partner!



This idea list was created for Ky Early Education Centers by Ky Collaborative for Families and Schools. Find more resources here: <https://prichardcommittee.org/familyengagement/> (3.15.22)